UNUSUAL PHOTOGRAPHS—NO. 46: A SCENE FROM DANTE'S "INFERNO."

PLAYING LIKE THE FOUNTAINS OF HELL IN A LAKE OF MOLTEN LAVA: JETS OF FIRE RISING FROM MOUNT NYIRAGONGO.

Mount Nyiragongo, whose actual crater measures no less than 2000 ft. in diameter, is one of Africa's most awe-inspiring volcanoes. Near the Ruanda-Urundi border in the east of the Belgian Congo, this 11,000-ft. colossus is claimed to be the only volcano which retains a permanent lake of molten lava. This lake covers an area of nearly 48,000 sq. yds., and is streaked with jagged veins of ever-changing colour, which form weird patterns of compelling and horrible beauty. For anyone suffering from the delusion that mankind controls the world, one glance at this should prove an effective cure.

Photograph by Emil Schulthess, from his book "Africa," published by Collins at 6 guineas.

UNUSUAL PHOTOGRAPHS—NO. 47: A SEA IN THE

A SEA WHICH IS ONLY THERE TO MOCK THE PARCHED TRAVELLER IN THE DES

This remarkable photograph of a desert mirage shows two horizons, one the true one about an inch above the other. Between the two lies what appears to be a lake, reflecting the shapes or shadows of distant hills which rise out of it like the enchanted castles of mediæval legends. Of course, the lake does not exist, and if a traveller approached he would in all probability find nothing but sand and rock. Men lost in the desert have perished in the pursuit of just such an illusion: others who survived had their sanity called in question in earlier days when they reported what they saw. In the year 1643, for example, a certain Father Angelucci saw a mirage in the Straits of Messina. He claimed to have witnessed an interminable line of columns rising from the waters. The columns then became an aqueduct crowned by a cornice, which was transformed into a line of castles and finally into an avenue of pines and cypresses. But the worthy Father got little credit for it, and one contemporary French writer even went as far as to say, "We are inclined to think that the southern sun had affected the brain of the good Father, even more than the atmosphere of the strait." To-day he would have received a more sympathetic hearing, for it is now generally understood that a mirage is a perfectly natural phenomenon, as likely to be witnessed by laity as clergy. On the other hand, there are probably only a few people who know exactly why and how a mirage appears. The "Encyclopædia Britannica," Fourteenth Edition (1938), offers some enlightenment on the subject: "A ray of light, when traversing a homogeneous medium is deviated from its original path by any transparent medium of different refractive index which it enters at an angle less than a right angle." If this kind of approach seems a little forbidding, let it be said that mirages form one of two groups of meteorological optical phenomena, and are sporadic variations caused by irregular heating. There are several different kinds of mirage, of which one of the most common

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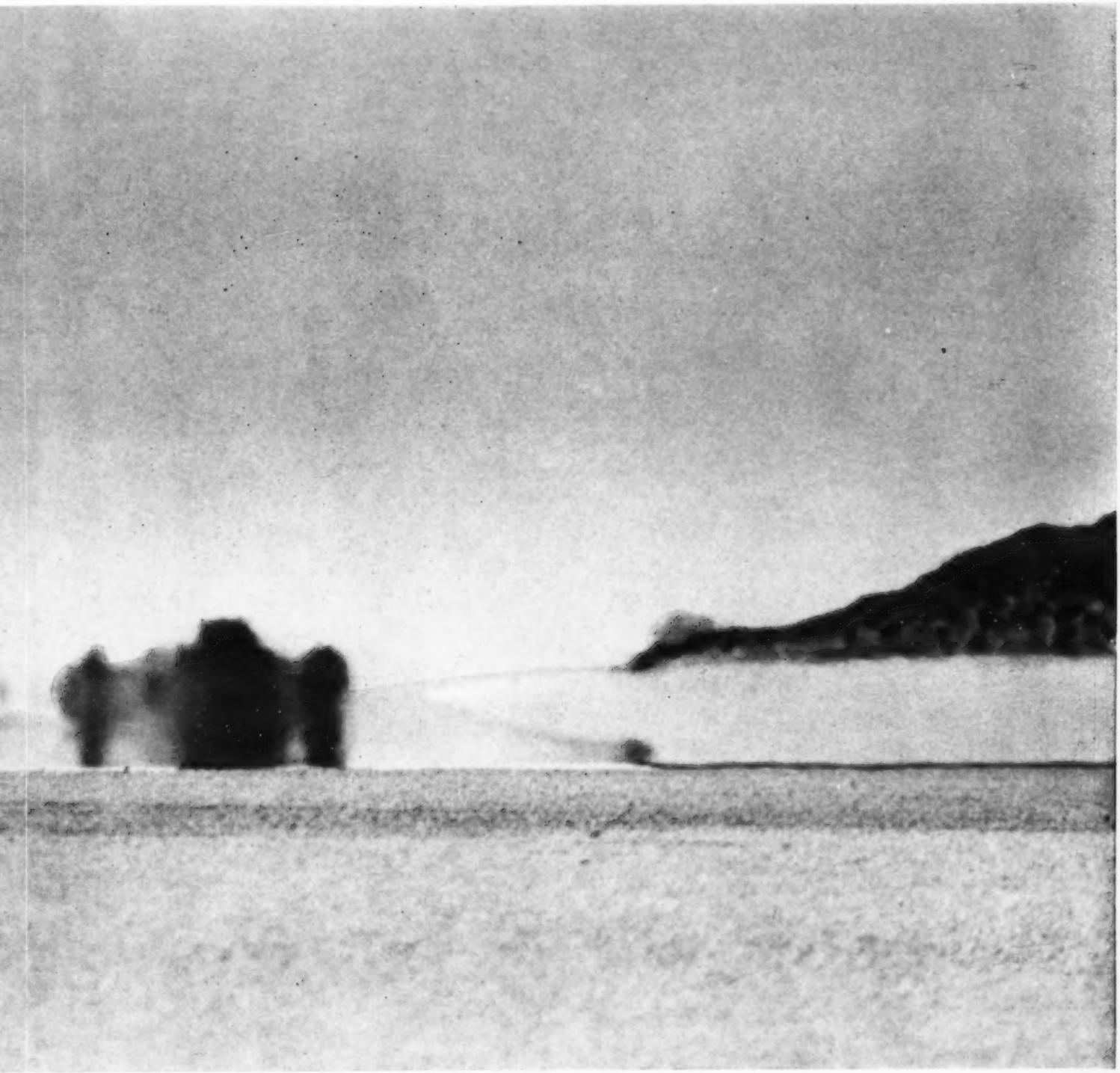
Photograph by Emil Schulthess, from his book, "Africa," publi

IN THE SAND—AN ILLUSION IN THE SAHARA.



THE DESERT: A MIRAGE BRILLIANTLY CAPTURED BY THE COLOUR CAMERA.

common is shown in the photograph above. When the sand becomes abnormally hot, causing the existence of heated air above it, any object viewed across such a heated area is seen by two sets of rays—one passing near the earth and the other higher up. The sky's image may appear like a sheet of water in the sand, perhaps surrounded by rocks and trees, which are reflections of real objects much farther away. Another relatively common mirage is the appearance in high northern latitudes of ships or icebergs inverted in the sky, and this phenomenon is caused by a similar set of circumstances. In such a case only the upper of the two sets of rays are seen. The mirage of the kind observed by Father Angelucci is known as "Fata Morgana," which is a most spectacular phenomenon and has given rise to several fantastic "ghost" stories. The Fata Morgana is generally a native of the Straits of Messina and consists of the vertical elongation of something seen on the opposite shore. The object may, in fact, be magnified both horizontally and vertically, and in misty weather this double magnification may give the impression of an object "looming" out of the clouds in enormous size. But Fata Morgana is not confined to the Straits of Messina. Back in 1933 we published an amazing series of photographs which showed the same phenomenon on the plains of Hungary: in this series farms, trains, herds at a draw-well, and whole lines of trees were recorded standing in blurred outline, but huge in size, above the horizon. Apparently the Fata Morgana was observed in Hungary practically the whole summer through. To-day this phenomenon is still observed on the Hungarian plains, although far less than of old since large areas are now planted with fruit trees or have become centres of industry. Perhaps a final word on mirages may be said to come from "The Tempest," where Prospero tells Miranda "the baseless fabric of this vision, The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples . . . shall dissolve . . ."

k, "Africa," published by Collins at 6 guineas.

THREE DANISH PRINCESSES AND THEIR PARENTS IN A SILVER WEDDING GROUP.

In our issue of June 4 we illustrated the Silver Wedding of the King and Queen of Denmark, which was celebrated on May 24. In this delightful picture we see (from l. to r.): Princess Margrethe Alexandrine Thorhildur Ingrid, who was born on April 16, 1940, and is heir presumptive; Princess Anne-Marie Dagmar Ingrid, born on August 30, 1946; his Majesty King Frederik IX, who succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, King Christian X, on April 20, 1947; on May 24, 1935, he married Princess Ingrid of Sweden, the present Queen, who is seen to his left; and Princess Benedikte Astrid Ingeborg Ingrid, born on April 29, 1944. Owing to the fact that King Frederik VII (who died in 1863) had no direct heirs, the succession was made over to Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, and to the direct male descendants of his union with Princess Louise of Hesse-Cassel, niece of King Christian VIII of Denmark, by the treaty of 1852 and the Danish succession law of 1853. The law of 1953 restricts right of succession to descendants of King Christian X and Queen Alexandrine, and admits the sovereign's daughters to the line of succession.